

Daniel P. Vrakas
County Executive



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Vrakas Budget Cuts Taxes

Waukesha, WIS. – County Executive Dan Vrakas will present his 2007 Executive Budget to the Waukesha County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, September 26 at 9 a.m. His budget will include the most significant tax decrease since Waukesha County has had a County Executive form of government.

“I am proud to present this budget to the County Board and the citizens of Waukesha County. My budget lowers taxes and maintains service levels by focusing on efficiencies and emphasizing strategic partnerships,” stated Vrakas.

The Waukesha County economy is thriving and is experiencing a new construction growth rate of 2.6%. The Vrakas budget will limit the levy change to 1.3% and lower the tax rate to \$1.83, which would be the lowest in a generation.

Vrakas said, “Government officials often debate the best way to measure taxes. I believe that most people, like my neighbors, look at their County tax bill. If their tax bill is less this year than it was last year – then their taxes have been cut. If my budget is passed in its entirety, there will be a tax cut.”

The Vrakas budget will lower the County portion of the average Waukesha County homeowner’s tax bill by about \$4.

The proposed 2007 Executive Budget makes justice and public safety the County’s highest priority, effectively serves at-risk children and adults, and demonstrates a commitment to maintaining quality roads and facilities. Below you will find a breakdown of how the County Executive has allocated tax dollars by functional area:

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“Vrakas Budget Cuts Taxes,” *continued...*

2006-2007 TAX LEVY BY FUNCTION	2006 Adopted Budget	2007 Proposed Budget	Increase/(Decrease) from 2006 Adopted Budget	
			\$	%
Justice & Public Safety *	\$32,820,664	\$33,891,035	\$ 1,070,371	3.3%
Health & Human Services	\$21,245,589	\$21,870,606	\$ 625,017	2.9%
Public Works *	\$ 9,229,201	\$ 9,351,993	\$ 122,792	1.3%
Parks, Environment, Education & Land Use	\$ 8,154,473	\$ 8,061,629	\$ (92,844)	-1.1%
General Administration/Non-Departmental	\$ 2,883,455	\$ 2,628,422	\$ (255,033)	-8.8%
Capital Projects/Debt Service	\$15,839,014	\$15,527,876	\$ (311,138)	-2.0%
TOTAL TAX LEVY	\$90,172,396	\$91,331,561	\$ 1,159,165	1.3%
* 2006 Adopted Levy has been restated for comparative purposes due to program shifts in the 2007 proposed budget.				

The County Executive’s budget ensures safety and security in the County by adding new positions to the County’s dispatch center and jail. His budget responds to requests for more opportunities for specialized transportation for seniors and disabled residents. Also included is a proposal for the County Board to work with administration to implement streaming audio technology via the Internet to provide the public with greater access to County Board proceedings.

The proposed budget includes a number of cost saving measures such as merging the Risk Management and Purchasing divisions, which eliminates 1.5 positions. It reduces staff in Parks and Land Use department, as well as in the Health & Human Services department. The County will also expand its use of contracting out for housekeeping services.

The Executive and his administration are fostering a number of regional cooperative agreements that stretch the tax dollar further and improve services. Some of these partnerships include: an agreement with Jefferson County to share horticulture and agriculture agents, a Medical Examiner contract with Washington County, participation by the Parks and Land Use department in a regional water study and the creation of a regional dog park, and Emergency Management will share services with Ozaukee County.

“I promised to introduce a budget that meets the Republican Tax Freeze. My budget is \$1.2 million lower than would be allowed under that freeze,” announced Vrakas.

The County Board of Supervisors will hold a public meeting on the 2007 proposed Executive Budget on October 10 at 6 p.m. in the County Board Room at the Waukesha County Courthouse, 515 W. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha. Residents that would like to weigh-in on this budget are encouraged to attend.

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